

## FROM SMALL BEGINNINGS

MARK 4:26-34



Their future doesn't look very promising. After all, Jesus and his followers are just a small group of people in a little corner of Palestine, with few friends among the religious leaders and those in authority, and with a message that doesn't seem to be reaching very far.

So Jesus tries to get the disciples to imagine what the kingdom of God will be like. He uses images, little stories or parables, to paint a picture of God's kingdom and its future growth. His listeners know that the mustard seed is tiny, yet Jesus tells them that from the smallest of seeds comes a tree so large that birds can nest in it. The kingdom of God is like that mustard seed, he says.

A second image, which Jesus uses elsewhere, makes the same point. The kingdom of God is like the yeast a woman mixes in with flour. A small amount of yeast has a huge effect – it can produce bread for a lot of people. The kingdom of God is like yeast, Jesus tells them.

The message is clear: the kingdom of God may have small, unimpressive beginnings, but like the mustard seed and the yeast, it will grow into something big and have an effect out of all proportion to its humble start. ■

### REFLECT

These are challenging times for the Church in the West. We know the statistics; we can see with our own eyes how church attendance is falling even as the average age of priests and religious is increasing. The COVID-19 lockdowns of the last eighteen months have made matters worse. It is easy to feel down and demoralised.

It can seem like the yeast has lost its power, that the mustard seed is desiccating. We can be tempted to think that the promise Jesus made is not being fulfilled, and that, far from expanding, the kingdom of God is contracting and even dying.

That is why it's so important to hold fast to the promise Jesus made to his disciples, and that he makes to us too. Jesus assures us that the kingdom of God will flourish because it is God's will that it flourishes. And we are called to trust in Jesus. We trust in Jesus by putting our trust in small things and in God's grace.

The Holy Spirit is alive and active. Lots of small things are happening out there that are enabling the kingdom to grow. Many Catholics are looking seriously at what it means to be Church. They know the Church isn't made up just of bishops, priests and religious but of all the people of God. They are thinking about what needs to be done to help promote renewal and new life in the Church, how they can be a seed or a leaven in the lives of others and of their parish community. Just as the kingdom of God grew out of small things, they know that the little things we do, the little acts of love we show, even if they appear insignificant in isolation, can grow into something wonderful. ■

### DO

Think about those who have been a seed, a leaven, in your life, those family members or others who shaped and inspired you to become the person you are. How can you be a seed, a leaven, in the lives of others in these challenging times?

Think about those who feel excluded from or hurt by the Church. How can you be a mustard seed, a gram of yeast, in their lives that transforms and heals and builds up? What might you need to change in your thinking so as to help bring about real growth and transformation in the Church?

### SAY

**“Lord, help me to hasten the flowering of God's kingdom of justice, peace and love by being a seed, a leaven, in the life of my Church and my community. Amen.”**

### LEARN

The word of God is something alive and active.

All our prayers and good works, no matter how seemingly small, help God's kingdom to flourish.

### PRAY

Pray for missionaries and all who work to sow the seeds of God's kingdom throughout the world. Pray that you also will be an effective missionary of the Gospel.

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

O Lord, hear my voice, for I have called to you; be my help.  
Do not abandon or forsake me, O God, my Saviour!

**GLORIA**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

**COLLECT**

O God, strength of those who hope in you,  
graciously hear our pleas,  
and, since without you mortal frailty can do nothing,  
grant us always the help of your grace,  
that in following your commands  
we may please you by our resolve and our deeds.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of  
the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**FIRST READING**

Ezekiel 17:22-24

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel.

The Lord says this:

"From the top of the cedar,  
from the highest branch I will take a shoot  
and plant it myself on a very high mountain.  
I will plant it on the high mountain of Israel.  
It will sprout branches and bear fruit,  
and become a noble cedar.  
Every kind of bird will live beneath it,  
every winged creature rest in the shade of  
its branches.  
And every tree of the field will learn that I,  
the Lord, am the one  
who stunts tall trees and makes the low  
ones grow,  
who withers green trees and makes the  
withered green.  
I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do it."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**PSALM**

Psalm 91

Response:

It is good to give you thanks, O Lord.

1. It is good to give thanks to the Lord to make music to your name, O Most High,

to proclaim your love in the morning  
and your truth in the watches of the  
night. (R.)

2. The just will flourish like the palm-tree  
and grow like a Lebanon cedar. (R.)
3. Planted in the house of the Lord  
they will flourish in the courts of our God,  
still bearing fruit when they are old,  
still full of sap, still green,  
to proclaim that the Lord is just.  
In him, my rock, there is no wrong. (R.)

**SECOND READING 2 Corinthians 5:6-10**

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.

We are always full of confidence, when we remember that to live in the body means to be exiled from the Lord, going as we do by faith and not by sight – we are full of confidence, I say, and actually want to be exiled from the body and make our home with the Lord. Whether we are living in the body or exiled from it, we are intent on pleasing him. For all the truth about us will be brought out in the law court of Christ, and each of us will get what he deserves for the things he did in the body, good or bad.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia!

The seed is the word of God, Christ the sower;  
whoever finds the seed will remain for ever.  
Alleluia!

**GOSPEL**

Mark 4:26-34

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

Jesus said to the crowds, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man throws seed on the land. Night and day, while he sleeps, when he is awake, the seed is sprouting and growing; how, he does not know. Of its own accord the land produces first the shoot, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the crop is ready, he loses no time: he starts to reap because the harvest has come."

He also said, "What can we say the kingdom of God is like? What parable can we find for it? It is like a mustard seed which at the time of its sowing in the soil is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet once it is sown it grows into the biggest shrub of them all and puts out big branches so that the birds of the air can shelter in its shade."

Using many parables like these, he spoke the word to them, so far as they were capable of understanding it. He would not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything to his disciples when they were alone.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.  
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.

God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with  
the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,

*(all bow during the next three lines)*

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the  
Virgin Mary,  
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under  
Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored  
and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and  
apostolic Church.  
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness  
of sins  
and I look forward to the resurrection of the  
dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

O God, who in the offerings presented here  
provide for the twofold needs of human  
nature,  
nourishing us with food  
and renewing us with your Sacrament,  
grant, we pray,  
that the sustenance they provide  
may not fail us in body or in spirit.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

There is one thing I ask of the Lord, only this  
do I seek:  
to live in the house of the Lord all the days  
of my life.

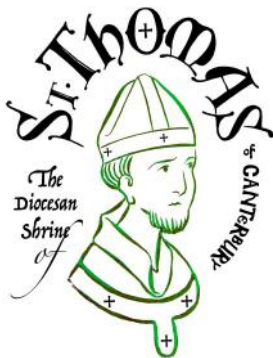
**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

As this reception of your Holy Communion,  
O Lord,  
foreshadows the union of the faithful in you,  
so may it bring about unity in your Church.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

Behold O kind and most sweet Jesus, I  
cast myself upon my knees in your sight  
while with deep affection and grief of soul  
I mentally contemplate your five most  
precious wounds, having before my eyes the  
words that David the prophet spoke about  
you, most sweet Jesus: "They have pierced  
my hands and feet, and I can count every one  
of my bones."

*Traditional "Prayer before a Crucifix" to be  
said after Communion*

# NEWSLETTER



## CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

59 Burgate Canterbury Kent CT1 2HJ

Telephone: **01227 462896** Email: [canterbury@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:canterbury@rcaos.org.uk)

Web Site: <https://stthomasofcanterbury.com> St Thomas of Canterbury

Parish Priest: Canon Anthony Charlton email: [anthonycharlton@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:anthonycharlton@rcaos.org.uk)

Assistant Priest: Fr John Howard email: [johnhoward@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:johnhoward@rcaos.org.uk)

Parish Administrator: Miss Linda Scott

St Thomas' Shop (01227 462896): **OPEN SUNDAYS FROM AFTER 9.30 MASS UNTIL 12 NOON**

University of Kent Chaplaincy: Fr Tom Herbst (01843 230 774) email: [tjherbst@gmail.com](mailto:tjherbst@gmail.com)

St Thomas' Catholic Primary School: Head Teacher: Miss Lisa D'Agostini (01227 462539)

St Anselm's Catholic Secondary School: Exec Prin: Mr M Walters; Academy Prin: Mr J Rowarth (01227 826200)

The Parish Office is open Mondays, Tuesdays,  
Thursdays and Fridays 10am to 3.00pm  
(closed 1.00pm to 1.30pm for lunch)

### ALL MASSES ARE LIVESTREAMED

6.00 pm (Vigil): Margaret Green (née Owen) - RIP  
(Connelly)

2nd  
Collect:  
CaTEW

**Sunday, 13th June: Eleventh Sunday** Mk 4: 26-34

8.00am: People of the Parish

9.30am: Dr John Dillon (D.P. Evans)  
Baptism of Scarlett & Jessica Maguire during Mass

11.00am: Michael Reynolds - RIP (Mary Reynolds)

6.00 pm: Sister Andrea Thomas Kartharan CJ - recovery  
(Helen Natrass)

**Monday 14th June: Feria** Mt 5: 38-42

7.30 am: Hannalore & Hugh Hall - RIP (Mike Hall)

12 noon: Oleksa Melnyk (Alex and family)

6.00pm: Live streamed Prayer

**Tuesday 15th June: Feria** Mt 5: 43-48

12 noon: Ray Scott - RIP & Betty Scott - welfare (Linda)

6.00pm: Live-streamed Prayer

**Wednesday 16th June: St Richard of Chichester** Mt 6:1-6;16-18

7.30 am: Jill Robertson on her birthday (Scott Family)

10.30am - 11.30am: Reconciliation and Adoration

12 noon: Intentions of Sean Clancy

6.00pm: Live streamed Prayer

**Thursday 17th June: Feria** Mt 6: 7-15

7.30 am: Masie McCarthy - RIP (Miriam Mehlin)

12 noon: Linda Harrold - welfare (Carol Lewis)

6.00pm: Live streamed Prayer

7 - 8pm: Adoration for Young Adults with Fr John

**Friday 18th June: Feria** Mt 6: 19-23

12 noon: Josephine (RIP) & Patricia Burton (Miriam Mehlin)  
After Mass, Adoration until 1.30pm

6.00pm: Live streamed Prayer

7.30pm: Bonnie Yendell - RIP (Sophia White)

**Saturday 19th June: St Romuald, Abbot** Mt 6: 24-34

10.30am - 11.30am: Reconciliation and Adoration

12 noon: Mr R K Sanyal - RIP (Tessa Metcalfe)

6.00 pm (Vigil): Fr Pat Collins CM - Golden Jubilee (Helen)

**Sunday, 20th June: Twelfth Sunday (B)** Mk 4: 35-41

Day of Prayer for Human Life

8.00am: Thanksgiving (Kenny Family)

9.30am: Marion Nash - RIP (Annie Keane)

11.00am: People of the Parish

6.00 pm: Dan Lynch - welfare (Fr Anthony)

2nd Collect:  
Day for Life

### PARISH MATTERS

#### Please remember in your prayers:

Marie Strong, Angeline Frizell, Luisa Ward, Janette Hughes, Barbara Brett, Mary Dittrich, Pat Gibson, Jenni Aldridge, Mary Reynolds, Brian Wicker, Joan Sutton, Audrey Martin, Elizabeth Gilhenny, Bill Parker, Lucy Purbrick, Josie Carr, Simon Lam, Sr Anne Bross (formerly of our parish), Fr John Slater, Jennifer Lang, Pauline Lilford, Barbara Markham, Patricia Gray, Patrick Sellars, Sr Margaret McGrath, Angela Nichols, Jean Boyce and Sandra Monger

#### Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Patricia Collins, Andrzej Czupkowski, Chris Bateman, Pia Iannacci, Antonio Iannacci, Ellen Fitzgerald, Anna Koeller, Fr Michael Gwinnell, Ann Sexton, Paulina Manfredini, Fr Michael Boland, Fr George Webster, Theresa Ramsundar, Canon Frank O'Sullivan, Margaret Willis, Rev Paul Saunders, Sylvia Guy, Pat Gill, Baby Layla Green, Paul Card, Alan Skeet, Rodolfo Ignacio, Isabella Bannon, HRH Prince Philip - Duke of Edinburgh, Dean Brazier, Marion Nash and Fr Kevin Alban (O.Carm)

#### Please pray for those whose 1st anniversaries are this month:

Vera Rose Fletcher, Roy Williams

#### COLLECTIONS: Our retiring collections:

**This weekend: 12/13 June: Catholic Trust for England and Wales (CaTEW)** - This collection supports the legal, financial and charitable activities of the Bishops' Conference, its departments, agencies and offices. The collection helps supply the Bishops of England and Wales with the revenue necessary for the central administration of the Church in this country.

**Next weekend: 19/20 June: Day for Life.** Day dedicated to celebrating the Sacredness of Life. Collections provide core funding for the Anscombe Bioethics Centre and other life related activities supported by the church through grants to charities.

#### 16th Canterbury (St Thomas') Scout Group.

Unfortunately, due to Covid reasons we have not been able to meet with the young people since March 2020.

But if things go according to plan, we will be back in September 2021.

Before we stopped meeting, we were a very healthy and strong group and although we have lost both young and adult members during the break, we would like to get back to being a strong group again! But to do this we are looking for adult help. We need adult leaders who can help us on a Thursday evening in all sections during term time. Plus, camping in some holiday time.

Beavers. (aged 6 - 8 years) 4.45pm - 6.00pm;

Cubs. (aged 8 - 10 years) 5.45pm - 7.40pm

Scouts. (aged 10 - 14 years) 7.15pm - 9.15pm

Training will be given, and every adult will need to undertake an enhanced D.B.S check. For more information please contact Pam Johnson on email [Scouts.be.prepared@outlook.com](mailto:Scouts.be.prepared@outlook.com)



## From Fr Anthony ...

This week the Archbishop wrote a letter to all the priests in which he said:

*"The past sixteen months have taken their toll on each of us in different ways. We are, hopefully, moving out of the most severe experience of the pandemic, but we still have a way to go. As I said during the Mass of Chrism this year, we need to undertake careful discernment about the future: What have we learnt? What do we want to hold on to? What do we want to let go of? How can we encourage people to return to full participation in the sacraments? What can we learn from, and how can we harness, the creativity of our parish communities during lockdown?"*

I think it is good for all of us here at St Thomas's in Canterbury to mull over these questions. As a parish and as individual members of this parish what have we learnt about ourselves? What have we discovered or learnt? What is really important? What can we let go of? The question that some of my priest friends ask is; "Will people return after lockdown?"

I have been heartened by those who have faithfully volunteered each week. Through their volunteering some parishioners have got to know each other better and meet new people. It is clear to me that the church building is a wonderful place of prayer especially when we have been able to have the Blessed Sacrament exposed.

The pause in regular life has given me an opportunity to realise how much I and Father John miss contact with the schools and interaction with pupils. We have had to use online communication in the preparation of the children for First Communion and Reconciliation and for adults who are being prepared for Baptism and full communion in the Church. It is significant that we only had five children for Reconciliation and Communion.

The live streaming of Mass has been a wonderful new resource and our new website that came on line at the beginning of the first lockdown has been a tremendous help.

We are beginning now to be able to visit once again those who are unable to come Mass and bring them Holy Communion.

Financially it has been a struggle and I would like to thank the Finance Committee for their sterling work. We have had to put some projects on hold but have decided to completely renew the shop. This week we received a report on the electrical survey carried out last month which means we need to do £5,000 of work within the month. There are also building fabric issues that need to be addressed.

The Gospel today reminds us that it is God who provides the growth. Jesus gives us two parables of planting and growing. We need to remember God enables the growth. We plant and water but have to let God do the rest. This a time to listen and be led by the spirit to do what God is asking of us and at the same time to realise that it is God's grace and love that brings about new life.

### Safeguarding – Volunteers – Disclosure & Barring - Recheck Meetings 11<sup>th</sup> & 18th July 2021

Dear St Thomas's Volunteer,

The documents required for completion and submission at the above two meetings are:-

*Volunteer Registration (Southwark)*  
*Confidential Safeguarding Self-Declaration (DBS4)*  
*Identity Verification (Confirmation of Identity) (DBS 3a)*  
*Applicant Consent Form (DBS17)*  
*Disclosure & Barring Service application (mauve)*

**DBS Form packs**, including all the above documents plus guidance notes for DBS4 and DBS 3a, are available **this weekend only** after each Mass from the priests in the Sacristy.

During the week, these packs are available during Office Hours (10h00 to 15h00) from Linda in the Parish office.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Safeguarding Representative, Peter Jones on the email [Canterburysg2@safeguardrcaos.org.uk](mailto:Canterburysg2@safeguardrcaos.org.uk)

**LIVESTREAMING IN CHURCH** . Parishioners are reminded that we use livestreaming for all Masses. If any services are to be recorded we will inform the parish of those specific services.

### SATURDAY EVENING VIGIL MASS READERS AND EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST.

Are you returning to Mass? Are you still willing to undertake these ministries? Please let Linda know via the office email: [canterbury@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:canterbury@rcaos.org.uk) before Friday, June 18th so you can be included on the new rota. Thank you

### Aylesford Priory Summer Fayre

Assuming that restrictions will allow, the Friars will be holding a Summer Fayre on 27th June 2021 between 11 am - 4 pm, with Mass taking place in the afternoon at 4.30 pm. All are welcome. See poster in Narthex for more details

### MFL Bereavement "Grief and Loss, Hope in Christ" retreat weekend - Aylesford Priory 8 - 10th October 2021.

This is an opportunity for those who have lost a loved one through death. It is a time to mourn and share with others. For more information, please contact the Retreat House: 01622 717272 or email [enquiry@thefriars.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@thefriars.org.uk)

### Marriage Enrichment: Building a Better Marriage – MFL Southwark

An online 'Building a Better Marriage' opportunity is being held on Saturday 10 July 2021 between 9 am - 1 pm. The course offered means that participants can attend from the comfort of their own home and there is **no group sharing**.

**For further information contact Carole: Tel: 07983 524 727 or email: [mflkent@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:mflkent@rcaos.org.uk)**